

Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 01045 011327Z

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ACTION SS-30

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R 011210Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1045

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO COMICEDEFOR, CINCLANT AND SECDEF

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MARR IC NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE - PROGRESSIVE PARTY
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP MEETS TO DISCUSS SOCIAL
DEMOCRATS DEMANDS

REF: REYKJAVIK 1033

1. PROGRESSIVE PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP WAS GIVEN A
STATUS REPORT LAST NIGHT ON PP CHAIRMAN OLAFUR
JOHANNESSENS ATTEMPTS TO FORM A LEFTIST PP-PA-SDP
GOVT. JOHANNESSEN WAS REPORTED TO HAVE REMARKED THAT
THE ECONOMIC PROPOSALS WERE RESOLVED AND THAT THE
DEFENSE ISSUE IS NOW THE ONLY OBSTACLE. HE DESCRIBED
LATTER, HOWEVER, AS BEING INSURMOUNTABLE; THAT NEITHER
THE SDP NOR THE PA IS WILLING TO ALTER ITS POSITION ON
THE KEY DEFENSE ISSUE, NAMELY A TIME LIMIT FOR WITHDRAWAL
OF THE MILITARY. JOHANNESSEN ASKED PP GROUP FOR ITS
CONCURRENCE OF SDP DEFENSE PROGRAM, SAYING PP REALLY HAS
NO CHOICE IN MATTER BECAUSE AS THINGS NOW STAND THERE IS
A 30-30 ALTHING STALEMATE ON THIS ISSUE. PP ALTHING
GROUP GAVE ITS APPROVAL TO RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF SDP
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PAGE 02 REYKJA 01045 011327Z

DEFENSE PLATFORM TO PP EXECUTIVE BOARD AND AUTHORIZED

JOHANNESSON TO TRY ONE MORE TIME TO CONVINCE PA
TO GO ALONG TOO.

2. FONMIN WAS REPORTED TO HAVE DESCRIBED THE SDP DEFENSE
PLATFORM AS FOLLOWS:

(A) IMMEDIATE TAKEOVER BY ICELAND COAST GUARD OF
THE SAR ACTIVITY WITH THE FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSIST-
ANCE OF NATO (COMMENT: READ THIS AS USG).

(B) REQUIRE USG TO COMMENCE ON-BASE HOUSING PROGRAM
BY NEXT SUMMER FOR ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEIR
FAMILIES.

(C) PROCEED IMMEDIATELY WITH THE SEPARATION OF THE
MILITARY AND CIVILIAN AIRPORTS. AGUSTSSON COMMENTED
ICELAND DOES NOT HAVE THE FUNDS TO FINANCE ITS SHARE
(UNSPECIFIED).

(D) STRENGTHEN THE ICELAND DEFENSE COUNCIL SO THAT
IT WILL PLAY A "SUBSTANTIVE POLICY ROLE" (NOT OTHERWISE
DEFINED) INSTEAD OF THE LIMITED ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE IT
NOW HAS.

(E) INITIATE JOINT US-ICELANDIC STUDIES TO DETER-
MINE HOW AND WHEN TO PROCEED WITH CONVERSION OF IDF FROM
A MILITARY BASE TO AN UNARMED SURVEILLANCE STATION MANNED
SOLELY BY ICELANDERS. NO TIME LIMIT TO BE SET ON COM-
PLETING CONVERSION BUT COMMENCE BY REQUESTING USG TO
PROVIDE LIST OF JOBS ICELANDERS CAN FILL IMMEDIATELY WITH-
OUT IMPAIRING IDF MISSION. AGUSTSSON IS REPORTED TO HAVE
REMARKED HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO OBTAIN SUCH A LIST FOR PAST
YEAR WITHOUT SUCCESS (COMMENT: THIS IS UNTRUE. A DETAILED
LIST OF 431 JOBS WAS HANDED TO MFA LEGAL ADVISOR HANS
ANDERSEN ON FEB 12, 1974).

(F) STRENGTHEN ICELAND POLICE FORCE TO ENABLE IT TO
TAKE OVER BASE SECURITY DUTIES.

3. AGUSTSSON ALSO REPORTED THAT IT WAS SDP PLAN TO SETTLE
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PAGE 03 REYKJA 01045 011327Z

THE DEFENSE ISSUE AS THE FIRST ITEM ON THE GOVT AGENDA.
IF USG AGREES TO PROPOSALS, SDP ENVISAGES A US-ICELANDIC
AGREEMENT BEFORE OPENING OF NEXT ALTHING SESSION EARLY
OCTOBER.

4. SOURCE OF INFORMATION ADVISED AMBASSADOR THAT
JOHANNESSON APPEARED VERY DISCOURAGED DURING MEETING AND
REMARKED HE MIGHT REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT NEXT WEEK HIS

FAILURE TO FORM NEW GOVT. HE WAS NOT THE LEAST BIT OPTIMISTIC HE COULD SUCCEED IN CONVINCING PA TO ALTER ITS STAND ON THE DEFENSE TIME LIMIT ISSUE. HE ALSO APPEARED OPPOSED TO FORMATION OF AN IP-PP GOVT. INFORMANT INDICATED IT NOT INCONCEIVABLE FOR JOHANNESSON TO RECOMMEND TO PRESIDENT THE APPOINTMENT OF A GOVT OF NON-PARLIAMENT MEMBERS, WHICH PRESIDENT APPARENTLY HAS AUTHORITY TO DO. IF THIS MATERIALIZES, ITS PROGRAMS INCLUDING ACTION ON DEFENSE ISSUE, WILL HAVE TO HAVE THE APPROVAL OF THE ALTHING.

5. COMMENT: SOURCE OF ABOVE INFORMATION HAS GENERALLY BEEN A VERY RELIABLE REPORTER, BUT IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW MUCH AGUSTSSON MAY HAVE DISTORTED SDP PLATFORM. THESE POINTS DO HAVE A FAMILIAR RING TO THEM AS BEING THE VIEWS OF SDP VICE CHAIRMAN BENEDIKT GRONDAL. IRVING

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES

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